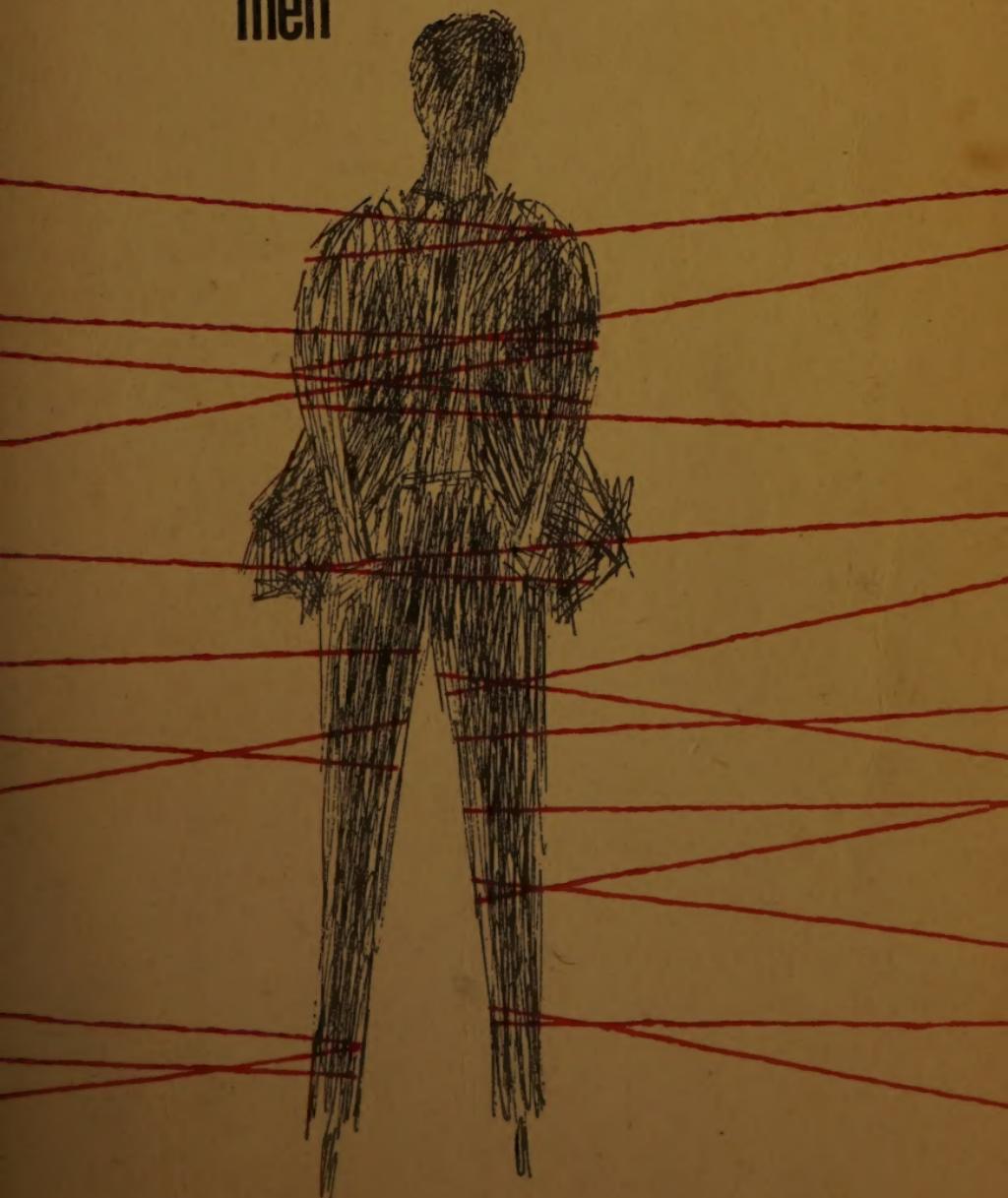


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Integrity

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editorial

A priest interested in social action told us of an experience he had recently. He was asked to address the members of a labor school, and taking for granted that the assemblage would consist of men he geared his talk to a male audience, only to discover that four-fifths of those present were women! He cited this incident in recounting his generally discouraging efforts to get Catholic men interested in social action. We cite it not because we think it proves greater interest on the part of women (for with feminine cynicism we note that women always flock wherever men are purported to be) but because the labor school has always been held up as *the* masculine tower in a Catholic fortress manned by women. The priest went on to tell us that he felt those men who had gone into social action in the past had met with so little success that the younger generation had no urge to follow them.

Then Billy Hough came to see us. Billy is the organizer for the Young Christian Workers who came from his native Ireland by way of England. The picture he gave of male interest in the lay apostolate was equally black. He told us of his attempts to get guys to go to YCW meetings; attempts that are frequently foiled by solicitous Mamas who tell their sons they look tired and better stay home and rest. The sons, Billy felt, are only too eager to fly to the protection of momism.

Our third visitor was Rom Maione, also of the YCW, but from Canada. His explanation of inaction on the part of young Catholic males tied in nicely with David Riesman's analysis of the other-directedness of the American character. The fellows, Rom felt, are not anxious to think for themselves; they look to see what other fellows do and are guided accordingly. Taking an interest in social action is a launching out into the deep for which they have had no preparation. They are unthinking devotees of the modern religion of materialism, and since (Rom said) it satisfies them more than it does women, why should they be interested in change?

The dominance of women in lay groups, one man told us, tends to keep away men with independent ideas and attracts those who are docile to female leadership; and then the women leaders lament that men are not manly!

But it would be erroneous to give the impression that Catholic men are a breed unto themselves. They share the same influences, defects and virtues as all men in American society. They are living the same complex life that leaves little energy for mature thinking—or for that matter, for the development of personal maturity.

What's wrong with men? Let's leave the answer to one wit: they suffer from being human.

from our readers

To the Editor:

...I have spent the ten years of my priesthood in working class parishes, (three in all, so don't think I am in great demand as an assistant, or that I am a movable feast); much of my time has been spent in attempting to train young people, mainly through the Y.C.W. in the lay apostolate. Apart from this there has been the usual run of parish work to do, which in this country boils down to house to house visiting.

I don't wish to bore you with an extensive account of what I have done; what I haven't done is far more interesting, and gives rise to the following remarks, mainly about this problem of the lay apostolate.

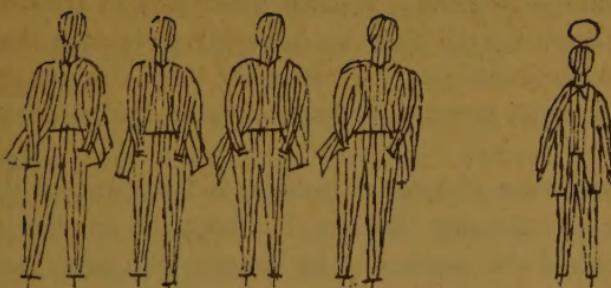
I think that both priests and lay people must accept the fact that there are different *levels* of Catholicism. There is nothing new in this idea but I don't think that it is actually accepted. These levels mean that there are various degrees of sanctity to be reached by different people. There is danger that the effervescent lay apostle is inclined to forget this, and is constantly upbraiding those of other "levels"

What is happening is that the lay apostle has some special line which he is always plugging, be it youth, the liturgy, social sciences or social work, etc., and he wants everyone to reach the same stage of enthusiasm that, thank God, he has reached himself. But little is achieved. If we accept the fact of "levels," then we say that there are, roughly: lapsed Catholics, bad Catholics, Sunday Catholics, pious Catholics, sensible Catholics, and that vast throng of Catholics who have never been able to grasp, for one reason or another, what the Church actually means.

What the lay apostle must do is this: instead of shouting out all over the place that all workers must be active in their trade unions, he must look at each of those to whom he is talking. Take the pious Catholic, who goes regularly to the sacraments, his religion is very much a personal affair, and he rather resents the fact that he should be apostolic in any way. The method of "getting" him is not to barge at him, but perhaps to approach him through the things that he likes and is good at, namely his Mass and the sacraments. These may be explained more fully to him, he can see wherein lies their social value, and gradually he may be persuaded to drop his individualistic approach to Catholicism, and begin to throw in his weight with his fellow Catholics.

The essence of all this is charity, which surely must be the hallmark of an apostle. You have hinted in recent issues that this is not always found among lay apostles. This is probably because they do not line their charity with patience, which is a most necessary virtue. . . .

Vincent H. Fairclough, Lanc., England



Joseph H. Fichter, S.J.

why aren't males so holy?

*Those who believe that women are innately
more religious than men
will be surprised at the conclusions of Father Fichter,
sociologist, author of Social Relations in the Urban Parish.*

Are males really less religious than females? Most of the studies made on the question seem to indicate that they are, and this appears to be true for all the Christian churches, denominations and sects in western civilization. Yet there are some societies in which females are excluded from the religious mysteries and in which religion is the serious business of the serious, older males. The ancient Jewish religion was dominated by males, and the influence of St. Paul kept women relegated to a secondary passive role in the early Catholic Church. Thus, if males are less religious than females in America this is not a universal phenomenon of human society.

The big problem in trying to explain this difference is the measuring and comparison of norms of religious behavior. In the obvious and most easily measured patterns of religious practices, the women seem to come off better than the men. This does not mean that personal piety is an exclusive feminine prerogative but among Catholics women appear to pray more often and probably better than males. They say the rosary, attend Mass, novenas and evening devotions more frequently. In any parish more females than males go to confession and Communion. There are almost three times as many nuns in the United States as there

are priests and brothers put together. Women make days of recollection more often than men, though there are probably more men than women who make week-end retreats. Females make more visits to the church than males, but males seem to predominate at nocturnal adoration.

Men are more often the advisers to bishops and priests and the top directors of large Catholic organizations, but both the number of women's organizations and the number of lay women who participate in church societies are far greater. The two great Catholic "movements" in this country, the liturgical and the lay apostolic, seem to attract more feminine than masculine participants. The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine is overwhelmingly feminine in membership, more and more parish church choirs are going female; most of the people interested in radio and the press as a Christian apostolate seem to be women. In the social problems of family and race and in the youth groups, female activity predominates. The only exceptions here are the athletic activities of youth groups and the crusade for economic justice in the field of management-labor relations.

These are all facts that everybody knows. But one appreciates the position of the American lay man better by comparison with other societies. The South American Catholic males, and also those of France and of Italy are notoriously poor church participants, while the Catholic men of North America, Ireland and Germany are much better church members. These comparisons indicate that males are generally less religious than females, but they also indicate that there are great differences among males themselves. It is also obvious that every community has a few holy males who scrupulously observe all of the counsels and precepts of religion.

can religious behavior be measured?

There are some forms of religious behavior which are difficult of measurement and analysis: the businessman who pays a living wage to his employees at some loss to himself, the doctor who bypasses a lush medical practice to give of himself to the sick poor, the lawyer who takes cases on their merits rather than for their fees, the socially-conscious man who fights to get slums cleared up, the man who does not expect his secretary to be more agreeable than her job calls for. It is probably true that some men who are not church-affiliated act in this way; and it is undoubtedly true that many Catholic men who are not in

church often and who do not receive the sacraments so often as their womenfolk, are acting from high religious motives which cannot be measured.

The trouble with norms for judging religious behavior is that they suffer from unavoidable limitations. Perhaps these limitations make it more difficult to measure the religious behavior of men than of women. Just as it is difficult to judge the religious motives of social behavior that is externally moral, so is it difficult to judge the actual motives of women who do go to church often, sing in choirs, help in parish organizations. The mother of a large family who cannot go to daily Mass because of her home duties, or whose husband resents her going out to a novena, may be just as pious as the one who is counted statistically as doing these things.

religion and sex characteristics

But the question here is about American Catholic males in general. What are the explanations for this sex difference in religious behavior? The common American concept (to which Catholics often subscribe) is that religion is an emotional experience, a thing of feeling rather than of intellect, a haven of comfort and security, and since men are supposed to be less emotional than women they are expected to be less interested in religion. It changes nothing to insist that religion is an experience of and for the whole person, body and mind, intellect, emotions and will. So, here we have two questionable elements: the false notion that religion is merely emotional and the widely accepted belief that females are more emotional than males (and *therefore*, more religious).

People who talk about the characteristics of the sexes like to say that males are progressive and active and that females are conservative and passive. Since the Church is conceived of as a conservative institution which exemplifies the calm, peaceful, traditional, let's-not-disturb-anything attitude, it is supposedly more in keeping with the female temperament. On the other hand, the dynamic and daring temperament of the male is more in tune with the restless, inventive, risk-taking, ever-changing world of political and economic institutions. Again it changes nothing to insist that religion is a dynamic force, that it is the yeast in society, that it is by intent the best mechanism for leading the world out of moral and social chaos.

Religion in itself, is neither masculine nor feminine. It is meant

to sanctify and save everyone. But religion is a human institution, and it comes to mean what human beings have made of it in a particular society. If the religious institution in the American society is, in comparison with other institutions, a tradition-bound, conservative, peace-at-any price, self-repeating system, we must not be surprised if people react to it in these terms. Social roles tend to conform to the institutions in which they are enacted. This is why the Holy Father has stressed the importance of changing the institutions.

This reform of the religious institution does not mean that the church must be masculinized. But it does mean that something must be done to remove the over-emphasis on the emotional, the conservative, the passive. If religion appeals more to American women than to men, there must be something wrong with religion, or with females, or with both. But given the present situation, we have to admit that religion does appeal to women more than to men. Let us assume that this is because the roles which women play in our society are more compatible with the demands of the religious institution. Why is this? Let us assume for the moment that it is because women are more emotional, conservative and passive, than men.

hereditary determinism?

This leads to the inference that females are by natural endowment more religious than males. If natural endowment means anything, it must mean something inherited, for example, that female babies are born with propensities toward piety, tenderness, kindness and religious feelings. Male babies, conversely, are then born with propensities toward gruffness, muscular prowess, worldliness and practical thinking. If this is not psychological and biological nonsense, it remains up to this point scientifically unprovable.

This sort of hereditary determinism is a quite popular way of "explaining" the religious difference between the sexes, and one hears it only too frequently in the Catholic educational system and in other media of Catholic propaganda. Side by side with this is the opposite of determinism: the insistence that will power is the great factor in holiness. Given the grace of God, the human person requires the proper use of a strong and consistent will in order to become a saint. But those who argue that women are "naturally" more pious than men are often the very ones who deny that women have stronger wills than men.

Are we then forced to say that God gives females more assistance than he gives to males? The distribution of divine grace is not clearly understood. Mary and Joseph, John the Baptist and other saints undoubtedly received more grace than the ordinary run of mortals, but there is no reason to believe that grace is distributed along sex lines (nor, for that matter, on a basis of marital and age status). Everyone receives sufficient grace to live a good life, to save his soul and be with God forever. But we don't really know whether God wants women to be holier than men, or that He gives them the advantage of more grace.

It seems more logical to assume that psychological and spiritual endowments *at birth* are individual differences rather than sex differences. This does not mean that everybody starts from scratch or that there is individual equality of endowments at birth. In a sense, each baby, regardless of sex, starts life with bodily and mental equipment which is unique. We do not know whether all souls are equal at conception, but it is quite obvious that the physical equipment comes from the parents and that even identical twins are not really identical in every way. These innate differences exist between boy and boy, between girl and girl, and not merely between boy and girl.

cultural conformity

How then do the differences arise which account for the distinctions of sexes in the patterns of religious behavior in our society? If innate differences of emotions, intellect and will are questionable, and if the grace of God is not distributed along sex lines, there remains only the area of cultural influence which can account for the difference. A girl brought up in Japan becomes a Japanese woman, a girl brought up in Germany becomes a German woman. A boy raised in Italy becomes an Italian man, a boy raised in the United States becomes an American man.

This is another way of saying that we are *largely* the product of our culture, and that the behavioral patterns of the individual male or female *tend* to follow the behavior patterns of each sex which are current in the culture. When properly understood, this thesis is neither behaviorism nor determinism, nor is it an over-simplification of the complex social facts. In any American family one can hear the mother saying to her daughter, "little girls don't act that way," or to her son, "you're a big boy now." Why stress the sex of the child unless the two sexes are *expected* to behave in different ways?

Unfortunately in our culture, there is implied in these expectations a kind of double standard of religious behavior. The girl is expected to be more pious than the boy; she is expected to behave better in church and to go there more often. The grown woman is expected to be closer to the parish and to help in parochial activities more than the man. It is considered the "normal thing" that females outnumber males at Benediction and evening devotions; that they be more active in the parents' club of the parish.

doing what's expected

Social scientists recognize that "expected patterns" of behavior are frequently more influential than actual patterns of behavior. The latter act as models in the sense that young boys tend to follow the patterns of adult males and young girls those of adult women. But the fact that there are certain expectations in the minds of others influences both young and old to act the way they are "supposed to act." This is an extremely important principle of social psychology which has been abused by dictators in the manipulation of people to predetermined ends. It has also been employed, often almost unconsciously, by religious educators and parents.

But why are American Catholic males expected to be better religious participants than say, Italian males, but not better than American Catholic females? The expectations unquestionably exist in the American culture, that is, in the generalized and accepted norms of social behavior and thought. These patterns of conduct are multiple and complex, are handed on from one generation to another. They can be analyzed in the values, structures and functions of the society.

Social values are those elements which are considered worthwhile by the members of the society. From a religious point of view the values are the meanings and beliefs of the people, ranging from absolutes like monotheism to vague statements like "you ought to be a good neighbor." These values are theoretically meant to have the same significance for both sexes. The Apostles' Creed is for everybody, the commandments were revealed by God indiscriminately for both males and females. The liturgical and sacramental ideals and the social virtues are bi-sexual in content and intent.

But it is a social fact that these religious values are interpreted differently for the sexes in our culture. A male is supposed to be more competitive than a female while a female is expected to conduct even

her conflicts in a more genteel way. The fact that "cattiness" and gossiping are attributed more to women than to men indicates that a man is expected to react in a different way. People tend to think of charity in a popular sense as a kind of effeminate do-good attitude; and the woman is supposed to have a more deft hand in ministering to the sick, the aged, the poor.

The idea is still prevalent that the man acts as a bulwark of protection for his family against the outside forces and dangers which threaten it. This is largely unrealistic in our present urban society, but it is a value which still influences both male and female thinking about the role of the individual man. The male is more "rough and ready," he is "allowed" the masculine privileges; he is more easily forgiven if he slips morally in alcoholic and sexual indulgence, if he blasphemes and cheats and is hard-boiled in his human relations. After all, it's a man's world; and it's a tough world in which the man has to be tough.

The influence of actual and expected functions is also very great. This refers to the fact that male and female are supposed to do different things in society. It is probable that the social values will be shared more nearly equally by the sexes in the future as the functions become more similar. That is, in so far as economic functions become interchangeable, women will tend to act and think more like men or vice versa. The function itself is sexless; the work of a teller in a bank, of a streetcar conductor, a sales manager, and so forth, can be done equally well by either man or woman. It is doubtful that the sex (as such) of the functionary actually influences the manner in which the job is done.

· changing functions

But not all functions are economic. The most repetitive function a person performs is usually related to his family. Here the roles of male and female are traditionally distinct, but in the development of the "partnership marriage" the distinctions are becoming fuzzy. In spite of the fact that about half of the gainfully employed females in our country are married, it is still true that women bear and rear children. The father is neither so intimately nor so frequently in contact with the children, but he is gradually becoming more and more domesticated. The home role is still differentiated by sex, but the virtue of domesticity is not scorned by the American male as it is in some other cultures.

Unlike the economic and the family functions, the religious functions continue to be clearly distinguished. The clergy is male and "has

charge" of the Church, and it may well be that in the presence of these professional functionaries of religion, the great body of lay men considers itself inadequate or even unwanted. But the religious function is obviously something more than ecclesiastical administration. The performance of religious acts is the central evidence we have of the religious difference between males and females. These differences have been patterned and are therefore expected.

The structure of our society refers to the status which people have in it and their organized relations to one another. The place of women in society is different from that of men. The American male defers to the female in a way which is considered unique by members of other societies. Urbanization and industrialization have released women from their earlier position in family, neighborhood and community. There are now large numbers of unmarried women, of women whose children have grown up, of women whose household duties have been reduced to a minimum. These persons have the leisure and opportunities to pursue apostolic endeavors.

the male on the move

The structure of the American society is constantly shifting, a fact which appears to affect males more than females. When we combine this with the fact that we Americans are a mobile, pragmatic, materialistic people with strong secularistic tendencies, we see that the male is in the middle of a system which interferes with traditional patterns of religious thought and behavior. To maintain and improve his social status (and that of his family) the male has to be on the move, he has to get things done, he has to show material results. All of this occurs within a social structure where reference to absolute moral principles, to supernatural virtues and to divine norms of behavior is soft-pedalled.

Is it any wonder that the Catholic male is less observant of his religious duties than the Catholic female? The culture has a tremendous, subtle, and often unrecognized influence upon him. He often doesn't know what you are talking about if you tell him, for instance, that the Spirit of Capitalism and the Spirit of Catholicism are in conflict. He often doesn't understand that there is a maladjustment between the religious institution and the other institutions of our culture.

It is not a question of bad will, nor even of weak will, on his part.

The loyal Catholic man thinks he's doing pretty well, and probably he is, under the circumstances. But he has little recognition of the fact that he is being pushed around by ideas and habits which have become imbedded in the culture. These patterns have become accepted as though they were absolutes. It is no accident that, as a result, many Catholic men react negatively to the exhortations of the encyclicals for change and improvement in the social order.

Thank God that there is scattered throughout the country a core of Catholic lay men (and a few priests to encourage and advise them) who recognize and resist the deadening influence of cultural conformity. The problem of the moment is to expand this small number of intelligent, zealous men into a broader social apostolate. Unquestionably, the typical American male has the energy and the will to "change the world" but he apparently fails in both understanding of the culture itself and in knowledge of the ways of changing the culture.

Niall Brennan

Song of a Skull

Time was when I was just as you,
alive and wonder-eyed;
but many years have passed away
since I lay down and died.

And in the years to come perhaps
you too may sit like me,
a paper-weight upon a desk,
a grinning threnody.

It pleases me to sit and leer
at busy living men;
for when you come to take my place,
just where will you be then?



Ed Willock

how we lost our manliness

*A former editor of INTEGRITY gives some clues as to
why men are the way he thinks they are.*

One who writes about serious matters (I try to remind myself) should remember that he is a member of a clique within a clique. The average man, literate though he may be, hardly reads a paragraph of serious literature in a year's time. As a result, the thoughts and interests of a writer on matters that presume an elementary grasp of the truths and traditions of Catholicism are thrice removed from the thoughts and interests of the average man. Those who read serious writing themselves constitute (whether they know it or not) a clique only slightly larger or more extensive than the clique of writers. I refer to these facts here because the position of men within the patterns of Catholic thought and traditions is entirely different from the position of the Catholic man in today's Church and today's society.

Without an intimacy with Catholic doctrines and traditions, the average man generally must take the Church on appearances alone. Consequently, the average Catholic man considers religion a thing for women and children. We who know something of her traditions may realize that the Church is intimately tied up with virility, but today all we have left to see are the commemorative ribbons, laces and pretty goings-on, which we must confess, if seen without the awareness of virile historical occasions, look pretty feminine and fussy.

The popular point of view which goes farthest toward confirming a man's conviction that "religion is for women and children" is that

notion cherished by millions that religion is exclusively a personal and private affair (as though it were some form of underwear).

During those terrible centuries immediately following the Protestant Reformation, in many countries of Europe Catholicism was suppressed to the extent that it was only able to subsist in secret. Most American Catholics are the descendants of these centuries of persecution and, as one might expect, they still bear the marks. One of these marks is a difficulty (amounting, almost, to an inability) to see that religion is a public and social thing in just as meaningful a way as it is something personal and private. People who have been for many generations denied the legal right to give public expression to their moral convictions inevitably adapt to such an enslavement by carefully limiting their religious enthusiasms to their private lives.

The point I want to make here is that this historical suppression was mainly a curb upon the zeal of Catholic men because it is the man who is most liable to chafe at the bit when religion is forced to be something exclusively personal and private. This fact is much more likely to be grasped once we realize that the typical Catholic man is the father of a family, and the typical Catholic woman is a housewife and mother. A father's faith normally finds expression in the study and rectification of those political, economic, and social problems which stand in the way of his children's opportunities. Catholic men were denied this right for centuries. This can explain many of the characteristic frustrations and timidities we now observe. It is no wonder (historically speaking) that the role of the family-father has been truncated to such tiny dimensions that his function seems at times to be no more than that of a breeder and a meal ticket. In the absence of a true appreciation of his social responsibilities (as a Catholic and a father) it would appear that he has attained his full growth when he has become a ready helpmate to his wife. (It's a sad commentary on a great vocation when headship of the family becomes epitomized by a willingness to dry the dinner dishes!)

the Irish of Boston

A glance back at my own personal cultural inheritance might be revealing. I am, like so many thousands of other American Catholics, of Irish descent. I was raised in South Boston in the midst of what was then the largest collection of Irishmen in the world outside of Ireland. I had ample occasion to hear tales and read the history of the Old

Country as well as to observe the effects of this history upon my contemporaries. Although the rancor should be forgotten, the historical fact should be remembered that for centuries it was illegal for a person to be Catholic in the British colony of Ireland. The British Penal Code under which my ancestors were compelled to live for centuries was, to an objective historian, one of the most inhumane documents of persecution that men have had to suffer in the history of Christendom. The Irish Catholic in those dark days was denied the rights of ownership of property, a Catholic education, political representation, etc. To put it in terms of our own American history, the lot of an Irish Catholic under British occupation of Ireland was comparable in severity to the condition of the Southern Negro prior to his emancipation.

Let's take a look at two phenomena in post-reformation Irish history which at first seem unrelated but on closer inspection are tied to the question of male avocations during the last century. I refer to excessive alcoholism and interest in adult games. In my childhood, I recall, drinking among men was the most talked of problem in the neighborhood. At an early age, I received the strong impression that, while all priests and housewives were rabid teetotalers, the men of the neighborhood took an almost dutiful delight in going on a spree on any occasion that could be regarded as worthy of celebration. I am conceding nothing to the wags who intimate the Irish are more addicted to strong drink than any other nationality. I have no reason for supposing this was (or is) true, but let me merely say that there was a considerable incidence of excessive drink among the men of my father's generation which seriously distracted from less dramatic forms of leisure-time avocation. (A leisure-time avocation, incidentally, of which those hard-working, tough-fisted men had very little.) The most flattering and at the same time accurate comment I have ever heard concerning the incidence of drink among the Irish, was made by Peter Maurin, the founder of the Catholic Worker movement. He said, "The Irish man cannot be mediocre. He must be filled with spirits. If it is not the Holy Spirit, it will be alcohol!"

It is not my intention (nor am I equipped) to debate the magnitude of this incident of excessive drinking, but I am sure that few people with a memory can deny that the habit of over-drinking on the part of fathers went a long way toward destroying regard for the paternal authority and, at the same time, burdened mothers with a responsibility in the family almost amounting to headship. Now, this social habit of periodic sprees began among the Irish when they were in

bondage under the British constabulary. It will be remembered that Ireland was almost wholly village and agricultural in make-up. A free family-father in such an economy would, normally, during his moments of leisure, plan and lay out schemes for furthering the prosperity of his children. For example, he would lay out a row of fruit trees upon the birth of a new son (a common practice among the free peasantry of Europe). He might clear and extend his arable land in order to earn a suitable dowry for his teen-age daughter. He might plan the construction of a home for his engaged son. He might confer with neighboring fathers and petition political action to rectify inequities.

But all these hopeful pursuits were denied to the Irish for centuries. A family-father, filled with the normal urge to extend opportunities for his children, was doomed to daily frustration. Add some "po-teen" to this diet of frustration, and the gripes of other neighbors suffering under the same yoke, and you have the historical beginnings of the infamous Irish brawls. The great miracle was that the Irish did not desert their faith completely. Instead, they persevered, not entirely soberly perhaps, but they kept the faith alive. It is not surprising, however, that some scars should remain, and the big scar is not the habit of excessive drink (that is not my point) but that the family-father has never been restored to the full realization of his vocation. He has not yet seen that the incarnation of his faith demands that he develop a social consciousness, that he develop in his children an aggressive and articulate apostolicity.

adult games

It was not until my early teens that I became aware of the existence of a non-Catholic opinion. This may seem strange, but believe me, it was wholly possible in the almost exclusively Catholic environment of South Boston. A Swedish friend (Lutheran, I believe) asked me in a shocked tone why it was that Irish men chose the Sabbath as the occasion for playing wild and boisterous games of football and hurling. To him (himself an athlete) it seemed a desecration, much as bingo appears to the non-Catholic community today. I found myself without an answer to account for this lusty show of prowess on the part of bat-swinging and ball-booting Gaels, conducted with religious punctuality on Sundays after Mass. After talking with many native-born Irishmen, and hearing a similar story from each, I finally came up with an answer. Whether it is *the* answer I am not sure, but it sounds plausible. When

under the boots of the British constabulary, the young-bloods among the Gaels were tempted on the day of rest to pick a fight with the occupying forces or toss a brick or two through the windows of the town hall. When this pleasure was denied them, they turned their aggressive attention to "Loyalists" among their own people. Temptations such as these were not easily dismissed, so, as a result, Sundays became bloody days indeed. Older and wiser heads, in order to curb this sabbatical mayhem, encouraged the young men to organize football teams and to engage in more manageable battles each Sunday after Mass. Thus the custom arose, for young Irish men, at every available leisure moment, to dash off to the nearest playing field and give enthusiastic vent to their pent up emotions.

My purpose is not to contrast the Irish Catholic with American Catholics of other origins. There is one historical fact which makes their common tradition similar rather than different. An eminent Catholic scholar one time reminded me that it would be far more accurate to look upon the historical persecutions in Ireland as a persecution of the poor by the rich rather than England vs. Ireland! The poor in England, at the same period, were themselves victims of laws almost as cruel.

The teeming millions of Catholic Europeans who came to this country and who constituted in great part the forebears of this American Catholic generation, for the most part were refugees from social conditions not unlike that of the Irish. They were made up mainly of the poor and the peasant, a group that suffered formidably in the early days of the Industrial Revolution (and even today in such countries as Italy and France). As Belloc has so frequently pointed out, the defense of the faith has been so often in European history accompanied by a defense of one's land (property).

Among a people whose menfolk are denied social and economic opportunities for a long period of time, the mothers of families (comparatively more secure in their status) will tend to have a more authoritative influence over their children than their husbands will have, and the dominant social tendency will be for the men to lose social consciousness and thereby fail to encourage apostolicity in their children. That is why so many of us in this generation, descendants of the peasant and the poor of Europe, find ourselves in the peculiar position (whether we are male or female) of looking to our mothers as the prototype of Christian behavior, and being left to wonder what precisely is a "Christian man."



Michael David

where men are men – and when

A Northerner who has moved South writes the most optimistic article in this issue.

"Men are, spiritually, the weaker sex." If you don't believe it, ask the women.

But let's not kid ourselves, brethren, it's not only the women who are saying it. A Trappist Prior once told me the same thing.

"You cannot draw close to Jesus, without coming close to His Cross. There's no other way. And it's the women who are willing to suffer. They are more generous with God."

Ed Willock should know what the score is. For years he has been vitally interested in the subject of Catholic men. He too admits that the men simply aren't doing a job.

Of course, the Mystical Body of Christ has such a delicate and profound unity, that it is not easy to locate the source of widespread spiritual anemia, and to pin the blame on this or that organ. If the men are weak, it is the women who reared them. And where do you go from there? To a large degree, God mercifully permits evil to remain anonymous.

We can find other excuses too. There are important psychological differences between the sexes. The male is built around an aggressive core, with which he is to overcome all those forces hostile to his family and society. A woman is built around a heart which is meant, not so much to overcome danger and evil, as to nourish and cherish the good. This difference is even written into their respective anatomies.

Is it easier to supernaturalize the one set of psychological drives and equipment than the other? Yes, it is. We are none of us one hundred per cent male or female, say the psychologists and medical men; and we can each judge from personal experience which set of drives, emotions, etc., is the easier to raise to God, the domestic or the predatory.

Of course, I don't mean it's not hard for everyone. If sanctity were easy, everybody would vote for God. I'm just talking about degrees, about something relative, when I make this kind of contrast.

theological excuses!

We men might possibly even find a dodge in dogma! We know that Adam's fall was more serious and damaging than Eve's, in the exact degree to which his nature had been created superior to hers. The higher the nature, the greater the fall. Maybe Adam, today, has a harder feat to perform than Eve, if he is to climb up and regain spiritual balance on the tightrope of his own free will, in the 20th Century Circus.

And finally, turning from theological speculation to historical facts, there are the World Wars. It has shrewdly been observed that while men bear the brunt of the physical hardship and danger of war, the women waiting at home experience more intense spiritual and interior suffering. Physical suffering and danger may harden the soul; but it is interior trial that matures it. And we have had a good many wars lately. Maybe that's why the women seem more grown-up today.

But even given these psychological, theological, and historical "outs," we ought to be doing something more valuable with our time than making excuses. And so, I think it would be worth our while to take a look at the Catholic men in the South. They appear to be doing more than the men up North. How come? Are there special circumstances in the South that favor an active male laity? If so, what are they, and can they be duplicated, or compensated for elsewhere? Let's listen to the stories of some of our men in the South—"unknown" and "ordinary" men for the most part, right from my own little parish.

Suppose we start with a few of our old-timers. Some of them have lived here since Reconstruction Days. Old Mr. Hannigan was here long before there was any Catholic Church in town. Sunday Mass for him meant several hours' journey by horse and buggy.

Finally, in 1922, a priest opened the first chapel in town. As there

was no rectory, Mr. Hannigan invited him to stay at his place. For the next fifteen years, until a religious congregation of priests and brothers opened a house in the community, all the priests had their board and lodging at the Hannigan home. (We have heard of arrangements like this in Elizabethan England, when priests were forbidden in the country; but I don't think it is too well known that Catholic laymen down South were putting up priests for many, many years.)

At that time, *The Menace*, *The Forum*, and the *Yellowjacket*, three of the most vicious anti-Catholic periodicals ever circulated in America, were in great vogue. ("Why are we called the *Yellowjacket*?" ran one of their ads. "Because we sting. And if you don't believe it, just ask the priests!") The men on the job—Hannigan worked on the railroad—were avid readers of these periodicals; and, as he was the very first Catholic they had ever worked with, they took it out on him.

We are not making the boast that every Catholic layman working down South under these or similar conditions kept the faith. We know for a fact that there was leakage. Not everyone stood up to the pressure which was often physical, psychological, and economic, all at once. The point is that Mr. Hannigan did. And many other men did—at considerable strain on their ease, security, and property. They were Christians; men willing to suffer and to believe.

day of triumph

One day God rewarded Hannigan's patience with a victory as sweet as it was rare. During lunch hour, a fiery evangelist came around to harangue the workers. This was not an unusual occurrence. Hannigan's presence was an irresistible magnet to their zeal. It is a lot less interesting to denounce popery when there are no papists in sight.

But what was unusual about this particular incident was that the preacher was a fallen-away Catholic. Anyway, on seeing Hannigan, he broke into an enthusiastic tirade against devilish ritual and religious ceremony.

This gave Hannigan his chance. Rising to the occasion, he denounced such insulting remarks as intolerant to his Presbyterian and Lutheran brothers—all of whom used some sort of ceremony in their church services. So completely did the men take his side against the fallen-away Catholic evangelist, that a good many subscriptions to the *Yellowjacket* were cancelled.

Holding on to his temper, as well as the sacraments, Hannigan

took the sting and the hate out of a large segment of this community. By the time the Catholic population really began to grow, things were a lot easier. Catholics are respected pretty well today down in our part of the state. I don't say one would be elected mayor of our town if he ran for office; but at least we are spoken to politely on the street. This year eight non-Catholics began instructions for entering the Church. That may not sound like a miracle to you. It would if you lived here. It is Hannigan, and men like him, who have borne the heat of the day.

the fiery cross and the cross

The Ku Klux Klan never actually operated in our town; but Joseph Frieden, who comes from out of state, knows them well.

After they burnt the Catholic Church down in his town, they warned the Catholics to move on or to take the consequences. Many Catholics, the Friedens among them, refused to budge. Joe and another Catholic fellow were the business competitors of one of the Klansmen who was particularly vicious. Built like a bull, this individual warned Joe and his friend to get out of business. Neither complied. One day he met Bill Jaeghern, the other Catholic, alone on the road, and emasculated him with a knife he was carrying.

Everyone waited to see if Joe would leave town. "I wasn't looking for trouble," says Frieden, "but I wasn't going to quit the Church or my business, either one. It so happens I did a little boxing in those days, and I could take care of myself."

As if in a Western movie, the two of them, Joe and the Klansman, met one day on the road. Joe did not start anything. Neither did he walk away. He was just there, going about his business as usual, that's all. The Klansman looked him over from head to toe—Joe was pretty muscular—and moved on. The Friedens stayed in town.

Perhaps it is true that Frieden was risking life and limb for his civil rights, as well as for his faith. But these two things were pretty much tied together in those days. And the Church can well afford to be proud of her sons who stood up for both. In passing, I would just like to mention the fact that both Hannigan and Frieden are daily communicants; their behavior under pressure was no accident.

If the events described above were mere, isolated incidents, they would be of little use to this article. But as a matter of fact, they were pieces in a whole pattern of history—a violent, dangerous pattern. The

men whose Catholicity survived it may never be canonized; but they certainly intended, come what may, to die in the faith.

the younger generation

So far we have been listening to the old-timers. What about their sons? Do we find the same sort of loyalty and manliness in the younger generation, or is there a falling-off?

Let me tell you about Louis Rennier. True, Louie comes from a long line of French Canadians, and he was raised up North; but he's living in the South now, and we claim him. In fact, the reason he came South is part of the story.

One of the pillars of our parish, Louie is a union representative in the textile mills down here. About ten years ago, he was a machinist, tool and die-maker, in a plant up in New England. The men elected him shop steward. He became increasingly active in union work.

Then he was sent to take Fr. Shortell's famous Labor-Management course at Holy Cross College. The Jesuit labor expert gave him a solid grasp of Christian social principles.

Along about that time the union needed men urgently in the South. Completely unorganized, the workers could get nowhere against the combined forces of state, county, and city governments, together with businessmen's groups, like the chambers of commerce.

Louis Rennier was nominated to go South. Neither he nor his wife relished the idea. They had absolutely no one in the South, neither friend nor relative. He was able to decline the appointment if he so desired. But he knew how hard it was to get union men to go South, where the work was so discouraging. He took the appointment.

So that you will have some idea of the extent of the sacrifice involved, let me tell you a little more about labor relations down South. Strikes here are inclined to be on the violent side. The South was frontier country long after the Northeast was settled and civilized. The frontier tradition of taking justice into your own hands is not dead yet; and blood is generally spilled on both sides in any important labor-management dispute; state police mix up. Over fifty arrests were made during the last strike, and Louie has been warned more than once that his life was in danger. The last time he intervened in the arrest of one of his pickets, the officer told him plainly how many notches he had on his gun for Negroes and Labor leaders, and how there was room for one more.

Of course, socially speaking, you automatically excommunicate yourself from a large part of the community, by being connected with a labor union. The wife feels it, and Louie feels it too. It has been known, in cases where the churches were subsidized by the mill owners, for the preachers to accuse unions of being the work of the devil. This hasn't happened in the case of a Catholic Church yet, but Louie is keeping his fingers crossed. By no means have all the priests down South familiarized themselves with the contents of the social encyclicals. It goes without saying that many Catholic laymen confuse the local union with the Soviet Union.

Again, in this case as with the others, I don't think you can dismiss Louie Rennier's story as that of a man earning his salary. There would be a lot easier ways to earn a salary. Rennier has studied the teachings of the Church on labor. He is a staunch Catholic. Frankly, I would call his, a dedicated life.

public relations

Just a word about what's going on in a neighboring parish, before we finish with our examples. The rate of conversion in this parish has doubled and tripled. How do they do it? There are many angles, to be sure, but the Catholic men deserve a large part of the credit. Some of them have got together to learn the ABC's of public speaking, an art of great importance in the traditional South. One man, who has considerable personality, and an articulate grasp of his faith, has got the local radio station to give him half an hour every Sunday for a program called, "Belief of Catholics." During this program he sits by a telephone, and replies to all questions that are phoned in about the Catholic Church. He does not promise to be able to give everyone an immediate answer. But he can handle the vast majority of questions, and the others he looks up and answers the following Sunday. He has a very sympathetic audience now; and any insulting remarks or questions that are phoned in generally work for the good of the Church, he reports.

With men like this around—and there is no space to give you half-a-dozen more examples—we have done things down here that have not, to my knowledge, been attempted up North. I will not go into the business of money-raising, except to note that our little parish is in the process of raising \$60,000 for a Catholic school; and that this involves each breadwinner in a personal sacrifice that would raise a lot

of eyebrows in prosperous, big-city parishes up North. Our men are determined that their kids get a Catholic education. That is not a particularly Southern problem, however, and I won't go into it. But I do want to mention that our present little, overcrowded school house is the only integrated one in the entire state; and that our men are taking abuse and mockery for sending their children to school with Negroes.

Perhaps the most impressive lay effort I have seen since moving to the South is the "crusade" we held here a few months ago. In this "Crusade for Souls," as it was called, the men printed invitations to a series of lectures about the Catholic Church, and went around town knocking on doors, and inviting non-Catholics to attend. In a small Southern town, that takes a bit of courage, believe me.

Our pastor gave one lecture a week, for a period of six weeks. We averaged a non-Catholic audience of about sixty persons a week—very good for our community. As I mentioned before, twenty per cent of these people are now taking instructions. These all-out expeditions into the highways and byways are no longer a novelty in the South. One diocese after the other has been trying them out.

the needs of men

Any artist will tell you that the hardest things to draw are conclusions. Now that we have seen a number of concrete examples, are we able to spot any contained principles?

Well, for one thing, we have observed that God has blessed the Catholic men of the South with a quasi-missionary vocation. They see themselves responsible for something BIG—the defense of the Church, maybe, or Human Rights.

Men need something "big" in their lives! Perhaps women approach big issues through little ones. Perhaps they get interested in Human Rights through the undernourished Joneses next door. But men, I think, work the other way and approach the little issues through the big ones. Once concerned about economic justice, they will take up the cause of the undernourished Joneses next door. I claim no absolute antithesis; only two distinct tendencies.

Now it is a pretty big thing to be a Catholic. We are, in a manner of speaking, the sons of God! Not even the Communists have tried that on for size as yet. And all the problems facing us in the 20th Century are big, vital, and worthy of our extreme effort.

Then what's holding up the men? They don't *know* that they're

even close to anything big! It all seems like pretty small potatoes to the man who feels that the priests and the women are taking care of the Church.

Down South, the men knew that they were mixed up in something big—something worth a *man's* effort. And if they forget it, the Klan pretty soon reminded them of it. Even today, when you are part of a minority representing only one or two per cent of the community, you feel your individual responsibility, and are willing to sacrifice.

the nature of the beast

Let us never forget a man's nature when we think about enticing him into Catholic action. Do not think you will produce a good Catholic man if you can get him to do the same things as a good Catholic woman, and do not judge him a bad one if you can't! That happens sometimes, I think. Maybe the men are not enthusiastic about certain personal acts of service that attract the generosity of women. The women in the group will then complain that the men do not show interest: a complaint of equal logic to that of the housewife who grieves about her husband's not taking up knitting to keep her company.

Men have to be challenged as men. Appeal to their courage, not their delicacy of feeling. Until leaders appear, priests and laymen, who arouse the men by showing them opportunities for manly effort and sacrifice, on issues of consequence, they will not budge. They will not leave their TV sets to join the parish Altar Society. (And that's no slur on the Altar Society.)

taking up the slack

Up North, the minority challenge does not obtain. Hostility to the Church is not generally so open, direct, or personal. It is not the *existence* of the Church which is in question, but only the fulfillment of her potentialities. It goes without saying that there's going to be a lot of psychological slack. Who's going to take it up? The human heart is set on the costly. If it costs a man nothing to be a Catholic, he easily overlooks the fact that he is one.

If the Church is made to seem only a place for the good little girls—aside from the exceptional guy who goes into the priesthood—then you know what you can expect:—what you've got! If no appeal is made to man's intense, if inarticulate, hunger for nobility; if the is-

sues, the challenge, and the need are not presented in a way that engages *his* need to "be somebody" and to "do something," then you are going to have a hard job—which is what you have!

So from a Southern vantage-point, I would say, challenge your men. If you want to see them active, set them a man's job to do. Talk is cheap. Who is the "you" who's going to do this? "You" is the priest, the parent, the teaching-sister, the writer-for-Catholic-magazines. Down here, when our pastor wants something done, he gets the men together and lays the job in their laps. They know that if they don't do it, it won't get done, and that's all there is to it. I have not seen our men bobble a challenge to date, whether it's raising money or assembling a non-Catholic audience.

glimmers of dawn

Sometimes in this last half of the 20th Century, you get the feeling that the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity is quietly, busily stirring through our rank and file, everywhere in the world. Here, there, everywhere, you see little smolderings of grace—as if some pent up divine volcano were getting ready to explode.

Here are a few little developments touching Catholic men, which, however unimportant in themselves, are indicative of good things to come. For one thing, I am told that our parochial school system is maturing. As a convert, I have no firsthand experience, but friends tell me that at one time our schools stressed but one virtue, in the main: obedience. Now obedience is a tremendous virtue, and if anyone thinks he can help the Church without it, he is liable to wake up in hell. But there's another side to that coin; when you turn over obedience, you should find initiative. Sins of omission are sins. From what I can see today, our parish schools—many of them—have got the point; and, after all, it's the Pope's point. This is the century of the lay apostolate.

Even the text books are better now than ever before. That's a significant thing. Many of our boys are learning something now of the social problems that beset us, and what Catholic men are expected to do about them.

There are around seven or eight million Catholic men, though, who are not planning to re-enter parochial school, no matter how much the education is improving there. I hardly hope to make a hole in this problem, but I would like to point out a few little dents.

In another state down South, the Catholic men have organized

what they call THINK groups. Businessmen, doctors, lawyers, salesmen, get together and argue out Catholic principles as applied to business, politics, racial justice, etc. Their pastor supplies the theology, but they do their own arguing until they make the truth their own.

These THINK groups work! When they started arguing about integration in one of our states in the deep South, there were very few men who had any sympathy with it to begin with. They ended up by accepting it heart and soul, and by favorably influencing some of the decisions confronting their bishop as well as their state legislature. Do you know what that means? Men born and raised in the deep South actually thought their way out of racial prejudice, and took the initiative into their own hands! You don't see things like that very often in an average lifespan.

There's the "Human Relations Council" idea, which is aimed at the whole community. The idea is for Catholics to work on the "power nucleus" of any community—ministers, priests, rabbis, bankers, teachers, etc., and to direct their energies to the local social problems. In one Southern town where this idea is in operation, the leading men in town were instrumental in the appointment of a Negro on a certain civic board for the first time in history. Now they are investigating slum conditions. People don't turn their noses up at the recommendations of this group, because it contains the socially prominent members of the community.

Finally, I know of a new sodality of professional people—writers, teachers, musicians, etc., whose purpose is to help the more intellectually endowed to reach the fullness of Catholic life in their own theatres of action. For a long time there has been less activity, less social contact among the intellectuals, so-called, than in any other group in the Church. (Perhaps we have been guilty of *un*-intellectual snobbery.) These people, if anything, have more, not less need to meet, to exchange views, and to organize their efforts toward worth-while goals. This sodality is not a "men-only" affair; but I mention it because I know a lot of men are looking for it.

I will be glad to furnish the names and addresses where information about any of these groups can be obtained to anyone who writes me for it, in care of *Integrity*. There are hundreds of Catholic men capable of leadership, capable of prodding their friends into some kind of Catholic action—I daresay almost every man who reads this magazine could do it. Let's dry our tears, gird our loins, and begin with what we've got.



Dennis Howard

the enigma of inaction

*The record of Catholic men
in social action is examined by Dennis Howard,
associate editor of The Sign.*

The problem of making an appropriate Christian response to the challenges of an age is no new problem; nor is it essentially different today than it was in any previous century. It is only a bit more intense and pressing. Society is infinitely more complex and, despite its complexity, it moves a hundred times more rapidly than in any earlier ages. The complexity of the problem facing Christians is therefore greater and it is no longer permitted for Christians to take their blessed time in responding to critical events. As Père de Lubac has pointed out: it is no longer possible for us to await events, events await us.

A great deal has been written and spoken on the obligation of the laity to take a leading role in the restoration of Christian principles to society. A great part of the papal documents of the last century have emphasized this theme. Bishops and learned priests have spent considerable effort reiterating it. Millions of words in Catholic publications have documented it. And countless study groups and lay organizations have spent many hours chewing it over. Yet words have a way of hiding as much as they reveal. He was a very old wit indeed who observed after the resolution was passed condemning indecent literature: "Well, that takes care of *that!*"

The temptation is frequent to confuse words with action. Indeed, perhaps, it is time to ask whether it is enough to clap and shake hands all around whenever the Pope, or anyone else concerned deeply over the present crisis, makes a particularly brilliant statement on the Christian needs of the times. Perhaps it is time to take an account of laymen's deeds in meeting the demands of the mission that has been committed to them. Have Catholic laymen succeeded in making an adequate and appropriate response to the challenges of our age on every level of society?

In attempting to answer this question, I should point out that I am primarily concerned with American Catholic *men*. Further, my evaluation is based primarily on personal observation. There is no solid mass of statistics that I know of to support or contradict what I have observed. The main test that will be applied in each area to be discussed will be the ability of Catholic laymen to produce social-minded leaders and an intelligent following to support that leadership.

look at the record

Since the layman's primary apostolate is to bring Christian principles to bear on secular affairs, it is in this field where he meets his greatest test. Just how successful have we been in producing Catholic leaders who have made a Christian impact in secular fields of endeavor? In politics and international affairs? In business and labor? In education and communications? In scientific research and scholarship? These are the fields in which the decisions which will determine the shape of tomorrow's world are made. The leaders in them will determine the extent to which the society of tomorrow will be Christian.

In international affairs, the dearth of American Catholic men should be obvious to anyone who reads the newspapers. Men like Robert Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State, James J. Norris, European director of War Relief Services, and Richard L-G. Deveral, representative for the American Federation of Labor in Asia, are few and far between.

In the *Time, Inc.* survey, *They Went to College*, Catholic graduates rated several percentile points below Protestants on international-mindedness and a full thirty percentile points below Jewish college graduates. If this is true of educated Catholics, what of those with fewer years of education?

The experience of Catholic organizations in international affairs

substantiates this negative view. Membership in an otherwise excellent group like the Catholic Association for International Peace is tragically small, and a high percentage is feminine. Leave out the members who are priests, and Catholic men make a very poor showing indeed. The National Catholic Welfare Conference Office for U. N. Affairs, to cite another case in point, is staffed entirely by women!

To be sure, Catholics are very generous (but generous enough?) in supporting such Church-sponsored programs of international charity as War Relief Services. But when it comes to government-sponsored foreign aid programs like Point IV, they are not conspicuous in their leadership to preserve and increase such programs although victory or defeat in the world-wide battle against Communism may very well depend on American generosity in such fields. A favorable mention of the United Nations or UNESCO in the pages of Catholic publications is enough to bring scores of letters raising doubts about the editor's loyalty or accusing him of selling the Church down the river to the one worlders. (If there isn't one world, how many are there?) It would seem that more laymen than not take their cues on international questions, not from the Vicar of Christ in this one world of ours, but from the reactionary columnists of the right wing press.

men in politics

What of politics? Here, the picture as to the numbers of Catholics is a little brighter. But the quality is sometimes questionable. If we have produced a number of distinguished Secretaries of Labor like the late Maurice Tobin and the present James P. Mitchell, a few distinguished Senators and Congressmen like the late Bryan McMahon and the present Senator Patrick McNamara of Michigan and Representative Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota, we have also been known for more than our share of big city bosses: Hague and Kenny in Jersey City, Curley of Boston, and Prendergast of Kansas City, to name the best known.

As a group, we have made much of our patriotism when defending ourselves against grossly unfair attacks by professional bigots. It is customary in a defense of this kind to point to the high proportion of Catholics in the armed services. It is true that this may well be one valid test of citizenship, but is it the only one, or is it the best? I think not. There are more relevant questions, such as: How deep really is our understanding and devotion to the American political tradition

of Constitutional rights? To what extent are we willing to expose ourselves to the rough and tumble of politics? (And we could be sure that if we courageously stood up for the pertinency of Christian principles to politics, the tumble would be rough indeed.) How well do we fulfill our moral responsibility to vote, and to vote intelligently; to voice our opinions frequently and forcefully to our representatives; to join with other men of good will in movements for clean government? These questions, I submit, would be sounder tests of our political maturity and of our patriotism.

business and labor

Among Catholic businessmen, the voices raised for the application of the social encyclicals to our economic life are rare indeed. If I were pressed, I could perhaps name a half dozen people whom I know to be diligently pursuing this objective. I confess that my acquaintance with businessmen is not wide, but as an editor I have a better opportunity perhaps than most people to know what businessmen are saying for public ears. If many Catholic businessmen are in favor of Christian principles in our economic life, their silence is extraordinary. By contrast those who oppose a Christian social program for business are not nearly so close-mouthed. As witness such shameful episodes as the public opposition of Catholic businessmen in New Orleans to their own archbishop in the matter of the *Right to Work* laws.

On the labor scene, the Catholic picture is a great deal brighter. The late Philip Murray, George Meany, James B. Carey, Matthew Woll, are leaders of whom the Church can be justly proud. On lower levels, such men as Ed Marciak, John Cort, and George Donohue are typical of the better type of Catholic labor official. These men have fought hard to keep labor's record and the record of Catholics in labor spotlessly white, but as any Pegler reader knows, they have not nearly succeeded. Nowhere could a more horrendously corrupt labor situation be found in which Catholics, nominal, respectable, and lapsed, are involved than on the New York waterfront. From the so-called "Mr. Big," William J. McCormack, down through the Ryans and the Anastasias, the Sampsons, Clementis, the Florios, and Johnny "Cockeye" Dunns, Catholic names were involved. The sins that cry to heaven for vengeance were merely standard operating procedure; Christ was made a mockery at Communion breakfast tables. If it were not for the courageous, but yet vain, fight of Rev. John M. Corridan, S.J., and the small

group of heroic rank-and-filers around him, the good name of the Church would have been hopelessly smeared in the eyes of the down-trodden dockworkers.

what of other fields?

Education: offhand, I can name but one Catholic leader in the field of public education: Dr. George N. Shuster. Undoubtedly there are others, but none so nearly well known personally for his strong Catholic sense.

It is a fact that we have almost completely neglected the voice we have as citizens in the formation of public school policy, except for occasional forays against secularists and the Gideon Bible Society. Do we honestly expect non-Catholics to take our criticism seriously when we are conspicuously absent when there is constructive work to be done? If we do, we are expecting entirely too much.

Public education is an area in which it is considered improper for the clergy and religious to delve very deeply. If any blame is to be placed for the lack of a Christian direction in public education, it must, therefore, be placed at the doorstep of the layman. And there it shall rest until he awakes from his inertia and begins providing intelligent leadership.

Communications: I know of no Catholic publisher of a major daily newspaper. True there are and have been Catholic editors of deep Christian conviction in positions of influence on major dailies, men like Clem Lane of the *Chicago Daily News* and Neil McNeill, formerly of the *New York Times*. But for every such man, there are anywhere from two to a dozen whose influence has been nil or negative as far as Christian principles are concerned.

In other media of mass communications, it seems to me the picture is no more heartening. As for leadership in the fields of scientific research and scholarship, the picture is spotty. Some Catholic colleges are making an earnest and fruitful effort to play a leading and influential role. Nevertheless, it must be said that Catholic leaders in science and scholarship are far from numerous.

lay apostolic movements

In areas more directly connected with Church affairs, that is, official Catholic Action and unofficial lay apostolic movements, there is much

that redounds to the credit of laymen and much that does not. Movements like the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Cana, National Catholic Family Life Movement, and the Christian Family Movement have shown signs of developing a wide interest for the simple reason that they are meeting real and genuine needs. In addition such traditional Catholic organizations as the Knights of Columbus have done yeoman service in organizing their *Advertising-the-Faith* program.

In the official Catholic press and in Catholic schools, more jobs are opening for qualified laymen than ever before. Apparently, many bishops and priests are realizing what the average layman does not realize: that education and journalism, even when Church sponsored, are lay vocations as well as means which the Church may use to achieve its apostolic mission. This tendency among many laymen to assume that Catholic journalism is a clerical responsibility is a dangerous one and may well be at the root of their indifference to the Catholic press. That a few lay journalists have seen fit to found and direct Catholic publications is a tribute to their foresight. Indeed, in the lay-owned segment of the Catholic press, there is perhaps the most substantial record of accomplishment by laymen in any field of the apostolate.

Any effective program of Catholic social action must have its roots in the parish and the community. Yet it is in this area where the greatest work is still to be done. Since the war, many parish organizations have been revitalized and new ones have been started that meet genuine needs of parishioners for adult education and service. The work of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, of family action groups like Cana and C.F.M., of the Legion of Mary, of service groups like credit unions, and of similar activities have done much to strengthen parish life. Yet, it still must be said that over-all programs of parish social action in the local community are seriously lacking.

The test of parish social action is its ability to set the tone of community leadership in such fields as housing, race relations, good government, education, business, and the arts. Primarily, because it is not the direct responsibility of the clergy, such community action has been neglected. Again, the reason is a failure in lay initiative and responsibility.

One answer to this lack may be found in some form of Catholic community councils set up on a parochial or inter-parochial basis. Such councils would open a new channel in parish life for the expression of lay initiative in social action. Encouraged by the pastor but directed by laymen, such councils would enable those laymen who are prepared for

Catholic social action to carry out their responsibility to the community.

The apathy and inaction of the average layman toward his Christian duty in a world of crisis is one of the most perplexing enigmas that face Christians today.

As Pope Pius XII stated in his message of last Christmas: "It is true that, in one of the two camps, the voice of those who stand resolutely for truth, for love, and for the spirit, is forcibly suffocated by the public authorities; while in the other, people suffer from excessive timidity in proclaiming aloud their worthy desires."

The silence of Christians behind the Iron Curtain is understandable and explainable, but the silence of Christians in the free world remains something of an enigma. It cannot be blamed on governmental stifling of opinion, and to blame it on bigots or on an unholy alliance of secularists is to beg the question. Some Catholics take a certain painful pleasure in blaming it on the clergy, but this, it seems to me, is merely additional proof of the failure of lay initiative and responsibility.

Still others say that it is a moral and spiritual failure: that perhaps Catholics do not believe deeply enough, that surely they do not act upon the implications of their faith. There probably is something to this criticism.

Another school would have it that the failure is an organizational one, traceable to lack of proper resources. Here again the criticism has some degree of validity.

Others would have it that the fault lies with modern society, or "the system." Society has become so massive and complex that the individual is lost within it, can do little more than go along with society as it speeds toward its destiny. This strikes me as much too fatalistic.

Whatever the cause of inaction on the part of Christians, the responsibilities for ending it still fall upon the individual person. "The fault, dear Brutus, lies not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings."

The only way to put an end to the enigma of inaction is for laymen who believe in the relevance of Christian social principles to the present crisis to step out boldly in every field of endeavor, and to let the clergy and bishops know that they are able and willing to play their proper role in the apostolic mission of the Church. If the many statements by American bishops on the need for lay action is any indication of the reception such laymen will get, it should be at least a tolerant and more probably a welcome one.

Emil Antonucci

it ain't just Catholics

*While our artist, Emil Antonucci, was discussing
the cover and illustrations for this month's INTEGRITY,
he told us some of his ideas on men.
The result: we made him write an article.*

The inactivity among Catholic men is not peculiar to them as Catholics. Inaction seems to characterize most men in America. We must examine not simply the *Catholic man*, but the relationship of men and women in American society, and, in general, the way society affects and shapes their lives.

For better or worse, we get our basic values from the society we are born in. Society provides the individual with a set of values and attitudes which will enable him to live in the world without having to extemporize a whole new set of values as he goes along. It would be impossible to confront every situation in life and make judgments and decisions without some stock of readymade attitudes that one has already absorbed and knows are acceptable forms of behavior. The person may go on to create his own deeper, personal values or consciously and voluntarily accept the underlying foundations of his inherited values, but most probably he will go on accepting the given values as being "natural" and not question them too deeply. The effort required to create one's own values is too great to be undertaken without some very deep impelling desire, a desire which is very probably found only in certain kinds of temperaments. By and large people are not going to question too deeply unless shocked into doing so by some overwhelming experience.

Now, only once in history, in the middle ages, was it possible to consider society and the Church as being the same thing. Ever since, the Church has been "within" society, part of a larger whole and in competition with other loyalties. Once Catholicism was no longer

"religion" but "my religion" as opposed to "his religion," its quality and intensity became dependent on the degree to which one could identify it with one's society, or the degree to which one could sustain it and oneself in isolation from that society and live. In a word, if one's religion brought about a conflict with the accepted social pattern one had either to adapt the religion to the society, become part of an encapsulated society within society, such as the religious life, (a factor which created the marked cleavage between clergy and laity), or leave society.

the American today

The American lives in a society whose values, attitudes and patterns of living are almost totally created and sustained by social relationships. That is to say, his values, his sense of identity is not drawn from and nourished by his inner life, or by moral and cultural imperatives implanted in him by tradition and training (so as to be carried within him whatever the changes of his fortune or society,) but by his dealings with other people, beginning with his parents in infancy and expanding outwards into society.

The necessity of his being "well adjusted" is the primary requisite of well being. Life is seen not as the development of a unique personality or the attainment of inner goals, but as the continual interplay of personal relationships. He forms his personality around other people and his relations with them. His values and judgments are formed and qualified by the way they affect himself in the regard of others and not as they hinder or foster some private necessity.

In this society, the traditional areas in which the male dominated, work, politics, science, ideas, have all become so immensely complex, specialized and interrelated that no one man can hope to control his own activities in them. His function in these areas becomes increasingly determined by the next higher level in an endless hierarchy of authorities. The qualities which enable him to excel or simply survive are his amenability to the authority of established routine and standardized work patterns, and the extent to which he can identify himself with the goals of every one else. Any deep inner commitment or personal goal is liable to disrupt the subtle complexity of the work pattern and becomes a liability, both social and economic.

Our society, like the rest of the world, has barely survived a period in which the great radical movements have ended in betrayal and failure

and have engendered an ingrained pessimism about the possibility and value of personal and individual effort. Then, too, the institutions and ideas that once claimed men's fealty have grown beyond the scale of personal loyalties; they are for the most part abstractions in men's lives.

the implications of the new society

The effect of all this on women has been markedly different. The failure of the male's world occurred at the time when women had achieved a new-found function and freedom. The impetus of this new energy has carried women into the vacuum left by men. The increased activity of women in the fields of politics, religion, etc. is not so much evidence of political and religious interest as the use of these areas in which to exercise a new-found dominance.

The increased complexity in the areas of work, politics, and science, shifted the emphasis of living to those areas in which women traditionally and psychologically excel: social life, the buying and selling of commodities, the entertainment and communication fields and the decorative arts.

The personality types that form the patterns of personal behavior are created in these fields, and especially in entertainment where the primary situation—that of performer and audience—might be the symbol of our society, since ingratiating oneself with the social "audience" is the key to success, that is, popularity.

The specific function in these areas is the exercise of taste—a subtle, intuitive abstraction made up of innumerable details and complex value judgments—that has been the specialty of what is called the "feminine sensibility." Our society is like a department store, a world in which the maximum possible choices in, and variety of, commodities exist and where everything takes on the nature of a commodity. One's taste, politics, religion, ideas, take on value to the degree that they can establish one's public relations—their exchange value rather than their intrinsic value.

This is by no means an entirely bad situation. A world of maximum choice, even if only in commodities, insures a good deal of freedom, prevents the formation of those encrusted social institutions that weigh down generation after generation, and allows for a good deal of creativity. The really valuable things may not become "popular," but you can always find them if you really want them and they can never be entirely crushed or prevented from coming into being as they are

in some societies where a fixed and rigid conception of the "good" has been fastened to the social framework.

We have in America a society in which the concept of overall change according to a master plan or theory is no longer viable, and, in the light of past attempts, no longer desirable. Rather we have possibilities of change in the sense of constant and innumerable modifications according to the fluctuation of needs and desires. It is a way of action at which women have been much more apt than men, and it has given women the balance of power. The price they pay for it is the loss of a clear sense of identity as women and a contradictory attitude toward men. They resent the domination of men and are contemptuous of the man who allows himself to be dominated by women. They find it difficult to know where to direct their love and as a result the child gets either too much or too little.

If women are feeling lost in their new-found domination, men are lost in their new-found resentment of women and their failure to discover their own role. But the man hasn't got the newly-conquered areas of activity the woman has in which to forget his anxiety through action, so he withdraws into the phony clubroom sentimentality about "maleness," or he becomes increasingly homosexual.

The solution, of course, lies in some new-found relationship between the sexes which is not simply the facade of the warfare that lies behind our present "equality." How this is going to be achieved is the mystery. It isn't going to be through religion, because religion is primarily the concern of our solitude which finds external expression in our social natures. To try to "use" religion as the means of solution simply adds one more battlefield to the campaign.

James St. George Lynch

To Distinguished Millstones

For the peace we desired,
We've only acquired
Another of history's black spots:
The world will continue
To use up its sinew
In strife over nebulous jackpots,
As long as it suffers
Its eminent duffers
And worships illustrious crackpots.

book reviews

HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

by Etienne Gilson, Random House, \$7.50

Wherever you meet truth, St. Augustine said, receive it greedily—actually the word he used was "as though famished"; and that is indeed our first duty as Christians, for God is Truth before He is Love; indeed unless He were Truth, how could we know He was Love? The French, like the Greeks, have always cared for truths of the mind above all things, and therein lies their unique greatness (just as the English have cared for political truth). Among living Frenchmen, no man has served Truth so single-mindedly as Professor Etienne Gilson, of the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto, the greatest medieval historian of our, and perhaps of all, time. He has now produced a one-volume history, just of Christian philosophy in the Middle Ages, and its clarity is astonishing. Medieval philosophy is a great forest, a thousand years old, stretching across Europe and part of Africa and Asia; yet M. Gilson has a place for everything and puts everything in its place. He sees the wood always first and yet every individual tree stands out, always part of the wood, yet always vitally important in itself.

In his introduction, he sums up the whole difference between the Catholic and the Protestant view of the Church. The Catholic view is that not a single Greek philosophical notion has ever become a constitutive element of Christian faith; the Protestant view is that from the beginning of the second century, the whole body of Christian dogma is a construction of Greek inspiration erected upon the body of the Gospel. Christian philosophy stems from the Gospel premises; it is not a Greek addition to them; that is the Catholic view, and M. Gilson demonstrates it throughout his magistral work, while, however, showing clearly that whatever is true must be a part of Catholic truth, since there is no other, and must, sooner or later, be incorporated in it, as Aristotle was by St. Thomas.

According to Justin Martyr, around 130 A.D., Greek philosophy and Christian revelation appear as two moments of one and the same revelation of the same divine Word: "whatever things were rightly said among all men, are the property of us Christians." It is wonderful to see the way the great assumptions are gradually expressed: unfolded, as it were, in history. For example, the fact that God has not created souls, but men, beings made up of bodies and souls, is expressed by

Athenogoras (second century) who said the resurrection is the end, not of man's soul, but of man. This great truth is denied today by Christian Science, by Buddhism, Hinduism and all forms of Spiritualism. The creation "ex nihilo" from nothing, was affirmed by Theophilus of Antioch (circa A.D. 169) as against Plato's idea of the eternity of matter and it is interesting that today astronomers are divided between those who believe in continuous creation and those who deny it. Irenaeus (born around 126) stands firm against "secret doctrines" or special knowledge (*gnosis*) as taught by the Gnostics, who were succeeded by many other heretics, and today are represented by all who believe in a knowledge, or perennial philosophy, underlying all creeds and truer and more profound than any. "The true gnosis, or knowledge," says Irenaeus categorically "is the teaching of the twelve apostles." And the goodness of God is the cause of the being of all that is: all that is, is good.

When he comes to St. Augustine, M. Gilson shows how essentially Augustine differs from Plotinus and the Greeks. "That the Word was God found I there," St. Augustine himself says of his study of Greek philosophy, "but that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, that I read not there." God, for Augustine, is Being, "He Who is." For Plotinus being was subordinate to the One; for Augustine, they are identical.

At the end of the Latin Age, M. Gilson shows how Boethius wonderfully illuminated all subsequent discussions of free will and grace by his subordination of what he calls destiny to Providence. "Considered as the directing thought of God, the order of things is Providence; considered as the inner law, which regulates the course of things from within, it is destiny. These are two distinct realities, for Providence is God and subsists eternally in His perfect immobility, while destiny, which is the law of the actual succession of actual things, unrolls with them in time. Destiny does not oppose Providence, it only serves it. But neither does it detract from human liberty . . . the more man turns away from God . . . the more he is swept along by destiny; but the closer he draws to God, the more immobile and free he is."

Christian Philosophy grew to its full stature in the twelfth century, but, already in the ninth, John the Scot was boldly outlining some of the conclusions arrived at later. "Just as, on a voyage, the point of arrival of the trip out is the starting point of the return trip, the death of man is the initial stage of his return to God," he wrote, and, for him, the "one and only cause of all eternal sadness is the absence of Christ." St. Anselm, too, anticipated Leibniz's statement that if the Supreme Being is possible, then He exists. But it is with St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153) that M. Gilson is perhaps his happiest; one

of his best earlier books is the most authoritative book ever written about St. Bernard, and M. Gilson returns to him with deep love and understanding of this speculative mystic who preached crusades, founded monasteries, advised popes, and generally led a life so active as to make a modern executive look lazy. St. Bernard's genius was above all to produce a new theology which "united the Greek theology, based upon the relation of image to model, with the Latin theology based upon the relation of nature to grace."

What a wonderful appetite for knowledge and truth the medieval philosophers had! As Hugh of St. Victor said, "learn everything, and then you will see that there is nothing useless." And how daring they were: Isaac Stella (1147-1169) could say: there are three realities, body, soul and God; we know body less than soul, soul less than God. Is there anyone alive who could say that today?

"The history of medieval philosophy," M. Gilson insists, "cannot be reduced to that of the controversy concerning the nature of universals. Yet there is much to say in favor of such an interpretation." This controversy began with the Greek philosopher, Porphyry, who asked whether there was redness, or fatness, or whiteness, apart from red or fat or white things? People have been discussing it ever since, and are arguing it still, and M. Gilson gives all the many different opinions held by medieval philosophers, and shows how they have influenced contemporary thinkers. And he also shows how Aristotle's distinction, that *what* a thing is does not include the fact that it is, led to St. Thomas Aquinas' discovery that to be is not to become. On the contrary, "to be is an act, to be is something fixed."

This is a great age for exercising the body; nearly everyone does setting-up exercises; the President plays golf, Pandit Nehru stands on his head. But how many people stretch their minds, or exercise them with the great questions such as that of the relation of our liberty to the eternal laws, or the nature of our being and that of God? M. Gilson in this tremendous single volume of his, offers more to the human mind than all the "how to" or "in search of" books ever written.

Anne Fremantle

THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

by Jean Mouroux, Sheed & Ward, \$5.00

"The Christian experience means grasping oneself in relation to God. The Christian life means *being* in relation to God. To go straight to the main point, the Christian experience means knowing through faith and hope that we love God and the Christian life means, quite simply,

loving God. The life comes first; then the experience of the life... it is in relationship to Christ, in Whom are all the promises of God, in Christ our living hope, that the experience is founded The profoundest remark on the Christian experience was made by St. Bernard when he described it as being situated between Christ's first and second coming. The Incarnation and the Parousia are comings of light; between them is the coming of grace . . . a hidden coming always glimpsed in mystery, . . . (which) enables the 'elect' to 'see Christ in themselves' Christ is the traveler's bread; and the Christian experience is a little of this bread, which He gives to His own, to prevent them from falling by the wayside. . . ."

This is how Father Mouroux sums up the fruits of his theological investigation.

"The Christian experience is experiential, or it is nothing." By *experiential*, Father Mouroux means that it is a lived life and that it is recognized, not in any external sign, but in the very act of living it. "If any man love Me, We will come to him and sup with him." There is nothing external here. The keeping of the commandments, which is the condition of the coming, at once reveals the indwelling of the Three Divine Persons: "If you love Me, you will keep my commandments." By adhering to goodness, we are good, and we are in grace, and the Three are within us by that very fact. The goodness we then experience in our lives as a result of this adherence in faith and in hope to charity, is the very goodness of the Divine Nature. The Christian experience is lived: "that they may have life; and have it more abundantly." The Vision comes after, but right now the very possession of it is ours for the *living*.

How do we know? Explaining St. Bernard's teaching, Father Mouroux says that the signs of the presence of the Word in our lives are the will to purify and subdue the passions; the discovery of our hidden sins and the condemnation of them; the amendment of our lives; and the renewal of hope and the lightening of the burden. All these are operations of the Word in the soul. His Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Beauty, are all revealed. All these are the portion of the ordinary Christian living by faith. They are nothing extraordinary. Faith reveals these things as the experience of the grace of God. It must be a *lived* faith. This is the first of the signs, the keeping of the commandments is the second, self-judgment is the third, and the fourth is the inclination, the seeking and the joying of the soul in God.

In the first section of the book, the author is careful to distinguish his terms, especially since "religious experience" is open to the misunderstandings with which William James has connected it in his "Varieties of Religious Experience". And he also makes it very clear

that he is not conducting an investigation into the mystical or charismatic experience of God, but rather intends to determine the nature and the signs of the normal Christian experience. The ordinary believer is one who lives his faith, who is united to his last end by charity, whose faith is activated by the love of God. He operates by that faith, but is not, like the mystic, passively moved by God in the sense that he experiences that passivity as God's action in his soul.

Having settled on the term "experiential" as truly descriptive of his subject, Father Mouroux then asks, with theological precision, whether there is a possibility of a Christian experience, and then to clear up any misunderstanding that might arise through confusion with the Protestant theory of feeling as the experience of faith, he attempts to determine the extent to which the Christian is conscious of his faith. The penetrating study of "experience" as relation to Christ, to the Holy Spirit, and as communion with God, is taken up from the Scriptures. Then the whole structure of the "experience" is given to us in the closing sections of the book. Two excellent sections are devoted to the delicate matter of "affectivity" and "spiritual feelings," and in these two essays, the author does much to clear up certain passages in his first book, *The Meaning of Man*, which were, perhaps, through translation, more ambiguous than illuminating.

Father Mouroux's book is a deep one and highly readable; but it is highly technical as well. One needs training in theology to appreciate it and certainly to understand it. But it is a great contribution to what might be called the theology of the Common Man.

Joseph E. Norton

THE GOLDEN STRING

by Bede Griffiths, O.S.B., P. J. Kenedy, \$3.50

The Golden String is the grace of God as it is presented to us in the multifarious facets through which He pursues us down the labyrinthian ways of our own life: loving us when we refuse His love, seeking us out when we flee from Him. In this highly delicate and sensitive autobiography Father Griffiths has exposed, for our benefit, his personal and ardent pursuit of truth. Though the journey was a long and painful one, he never gave up. We can follow him through the Great Tradition of Western literature and thought, gleaning from everything whatever truth it contained, until he finally came to the knowledge of Truth itself.

Bede Griffiths began to wind the Golden String into a ball from the moment that he was first awakened to the world of beauty by his

experience of the presence of God in nature, which as he tells us, happened during his last term in school. This experience recurred as a leitmotif all through his life. It was to lead him into many paths and byways, in addition to causing him much suffering and pain.

We see him taking up a program of reading, at the age of fourteen, which was to take him away from the Church of England. He discovered Hardy's sense of the tragedy of existence to correspond to his own deepest feelings. From Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* he confirmed his notion of God as a grim impersonal power, "to whom human life is a kind of sport." Tolstoi's *Kingdom of Heaven*, however, gave him an appreciation of the Sermon on the Mount. He now decided to embrace socialism.

But his faith in socialism rapidly declined as the Golden String rolled on, leading him to criticize the whole character of our civilization. For him this criticism was completely secured with the reading of T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land* and *Hollow Men*. At about this period, C. S. Lewis became young Griffiths' tutor at Oxford and encouraged him to read extensively in philosophy. We find that at this point it was Wordsworth who provided him with his religion; and, strangely, it was D. H. Lawrence who assisted him in facing the problem of the true nature of love.

Still under the tutelage of C. S. Lewis, he continued studying philosophy. The *Meditations* and *Discourse of Method* of Descartes left him unmoved, while the "moral earnestness of Spinoza probably touched him the most." He had now learned the importance of self-knowledge. Spinoza made him subject his confused boyhood intuition "of a deeper reality behind the face of nature," to a rational scrutiny.

But the momentous event in his life came when he "identified the Presence he had experienced in nature with the God of Christian philosophy." After disposing of Hobbes, Locke and Hume, he went on to Coleridge's *Aids to Reflexion* and *The Friend*, which opened his mind to the plenitude of Platonic philosophy. Still groping for the complete answer, the future Father Griffiths continued to study Spinoza and Marcus Aurelius who taught him that a moral life is something that involves the whole of one's being and brings forth the flowering of one's whole nature. But, he was still far from real virtue because he had not as yet begun to train his will.

Although tremendously impressed by Augustine's *Confessions*, it was Dante's *Divine Comedy* which occasioned the turning point of his life. In Dante he found a "criticism of life" on a more profound level than he had found in anyone else. From Dante he learned that, "it was not the fire of love which was evil but the passion which made one its slave."

The Cotswold experiment in the common life was another decisive step in the journey. In that peaceful haven of nature, reading the Bible gave him his deepest insight into the meaning of suffering. In the Hebrew prophets, he saw a terrible judgment on our own miserable civilization. "The same degeneration from a primitive culture to a gross material civilization" could be seen in Egypt, Babylonia, and Greece. In the light of this revelation, he saw our own age as the dull and insipid counterpart of the ancient civilization. Logically, in the New Testament, he found the same ideas expressed in St. Paul's epistles.

The strong and sweet path of the winding Golden String finally brought to Father Griffiths the realization that he had to "surrender himself into the hands of a power which was above his reason and which would not allow him to argue but commanded him to obey."

This autobiography, written in the perspective of history and the Great Tradition, is of vital interest for our times. It is entirely relevant—an index of good literature and thought. The reader will experience the profound drama which Bede Griffiths underwent in his search for liberation and fulfillment.

L. H. Bourke

BELIEF IN THE TRINITY

by Dom Mark Pontifex, Harper, \$1.50

This slim volume contains a hidden stick of dynamite. Dom Pontifex "aims at providing an inquirer . . . with grounds for appreciating that the doctrine is reasonable and profound and of practical importance for religion, and indeed for the temporal good of society." (p. vi).

To accomplish this aim, he devotes his first chapter to a defense of belief in mystery. It is a sort of commentary on the words of the Vatican Council, quoted on P. 7: "When reason, enlightened by faith, searches with care, reverence, and restraint, God grants that it shall gain some understanding of mysteries. . . ." Note especially the words: "Reason, enlightened by faith."

Chapter 2 is an explanation of the Catholic doctrine on the mystery of the Trinity. The author wisely chose to start with the doctrine as it is now formulated by the Church, avoiding any historical considerations of doctrinal development.

Chapter 3 is concerned with the crucial question of the terms we use to express the mystery and our understanding of it. And it is in this chapter that we get an inkling of what is to come. Dom Pontifex lists (pp. 35-37) the various kinds of terms we use "which express perfections in creatures and which can be used to refer to God in a higher way or 'analogically'." These are: 1) transcendental terms, such

as being, one, good; 2) terms which are not so indeterminate as the transcendentals, but refer more precisely to particular created perfections, such as person; 3) metaphorical terms, e.g., when we refer to God as a Rock.

He concludes with a surprising statement: "The ground for applying terms metaphorically to God is not very different in ultimate analysis from the ground for applying such terms as 'person'." No wonder, then, that the author is incapable, in the remainder of the chapter, of making a clear distinction between what theology traditionally calls "pure perfections" and "mixed perfections." For him both types are found in God in a pure state; once again he fails to see that "mixed perfections" can be predicated of God only as of a cause, while "pure perfections" are predicated formally, although they are possessed simply by Him.

In Chapters 4 and 5, Dom Pontifex asks the question: "Is the doctrine contradictory?" In Chapter 4, he seeks the answer in the notion of *relation*. He cites the teaching of the Church on relation; he might also have pointed out that since St. Augustine, the almost unanimous voice of theologians in the Western Church has taught that only in the relations can we get some understanding of the distinction of Persons in God. Yet he is not convinced. "Fourthly, even if this theory is true, how does it help us in our present problem?" (p. 50) "To some minds at least the analysis of the idea of relation does not seem to go the whole way towards showing that there is no contradiction in the doctrine of the Trinity." (p. 51)

Chapter 5 presents us with a better explanation, that of Dom Pontifex (for he cites no authority for it in the long line of Fathers, Doctors and theologians). Let us present it in his own words: "The nerve of the argument is thus that distinction between persons joined by knowledge and love is, even in the human sphere, a positive perfection. Unity between distinct individuals is a unique kind of perfection, different from unity in a single individual. Hence the unity, together with the distinction of Persons expressed in the Trinitarian formula can be asserted of God; in Him this exists in a mode free from any imperfection or limitation. In short, perfect knowledge and love imply distinction without division, and in the Trinity there is perfect knowledge and love." (p. 67) The conclusion, of course does not follow, and if the author had subjected his argument to as rigorous a criticism as he applied to the notion of relation, he would have seen it. For on p. 68 he states: "Natural reason shows (we have argued) that from one point of view the most perfect thing we directly experience, and therefore one of the best starting points for expressing God, is a group of men united in knowledge and love: *only in a group can a man use all*

bis natural powers." (Italics added) This statement can be conceded; but the whole analogy is given away in that last phrase. Natural reason would reason that the perfection of many united in love and knowledge is due to the imperfection of the individuals and hence would be forced (unless enlightened by revelation) to deny distinction of Persons in God.

We might also ask the author to explain, how, on the basis of this analogy, we would explain that the distinct Persons in God are rightly called Father, Son and Holy Ghost?

James M. Egan, O.P.

THE CHALLENGE A CHARACTER STUDY OF DOMINIC SAVIO

by Rev. Daniel C. M. Higgins, Salesiana Publishers, (no price given)

This is not strictly an autobiography of St. Dominic Savio, but rather a series of flashes illuminating the high points of his short life, indicating his personality, and most important of all, revealing an enormously practical technique for the teaching and training of youngsters in both personal and group Catholic Action. It is not a literary tour de force and, I suspect, American boys will squirm over a few of the endearments, diminutives in the first chapters. We read the book aloud in our family, and we omitted them as we went along. What will be exciting to parents and children alike is the very live St. Dom Bosco and the very live Dominic Savio they meet, and the practical advice from the Saint to the boy about how schoolboys go about being saints, what their penance is, their duty, their mortification and obedience, how they apply Catholic Action (this was the beginning of it) to the schoolroom and the schoolyard. It is just as helpful to girls and it is vastly encouraging to parents to discover that one starts with just plain boy or girl and works at the development of holiness one step at a time.

The best criticisms come from the children, and ours listened to the story, were intrigued and convinced and started to apply the principles. However, they also said: "The picture on the cover looks like a girl!" If it is from the official painting of St. Dominic Savio displayed at his canonization (we think it is) then it's time such changes were made in the painting of saints as have been made in the literature about saints.

Father Higgins has written an enormously helpful book about this schoolboy saint, and helpful not only for the schoolboys but their parents as well.

Mary Reed Newland

HUMAN ASCENT

by Louis J. Lebret, O.P., *Fides*, \$2.50

This is a poetic little book which traces the ascent of life from non-animate to animate, culminating in man as the most developed example of animate creation and in Christ as the one perfect man. Father Lebret, a Dutch Dominican, an economist and a sociologist, is at present doing research in Colombia, specializing in a study of standards of living. His scientific background is obvious in his book. Not only does he call into use examples and parallels from the world of nature, but he employs his examples with the exactitude of a scientist and the sensitivity of a poet—a rare combination.

The book abounds in striking insights, as Father Lebret's description of the modern man in the street as "an unknown primitive in a super-civilized society," to whom the advances of science are largely a closed book, known only in such relatively frivolous products as television and wide-screen movies. In a moving paragraph he shows how all the things of creation were offered on our behalf to God by Christ: "He offers the fields to the Father—the fields, the river, the light, the great sun, all the stars, the galaxies and super-galaxies, all the atoms and particles of energy, all that stirs, all that moves, all that lives."

He has some hard sayings too: "Those who try to live the Gospel with a constant fidelity to its Spirit understand it best. . . . One can refuse nothing. The moment even a small thing is refused one becomes sluggish. To remain in the joy of Christ one must go to the limit of infinite demands." And a needed and Christian position on politics: "Forgetting that politics has for its essential object the temporal common good, Christians have judged it only in terms of its position on spiritual questions." Equally good are points made on the back-to-the-land movement and social welfare organizations in general. It is surprising, I repeat, to find so much common sense so poetically expressed!

But the price of the book will daunt many, I think. For 122 paper-bound pages, \$2.50 is a hefty amount. And the *Fides* assembly-line is still in operation. I, for one agree with Dan Herr, who sighs for some device by which to tell one *Fides* book from another. Couldn't they trade illustrators with, say, Sheed & Ward? *Patricia McGowan*

THE PSALMS IN RHYTHMIC PROSE

Translated by James A. Kleist, S.J. and Thomas J. Lyman, S.J.
Bruce, \$4.00

Father Kleist and Lyman have given us a new translation of the psalms in cadenced prose. Their version is marked by clarity and dignity of

expression, and facility of movement. However there is a question of the complete wisdom of adopting a rigidly patterned prose rhythm, ". . . it will be found that the movement of the Psalms in this translation is essentially iambic with the occasional and natural substitution of an anapaest." It is too liable to monotony and affectation. The rhythm of prose seems to belong rather to something larger, more various and more complex than any metrical foot.

One finds an undeniable felicity in the choice of words throughout, but here and there is a cheek-by-jowl discordance of the pedantic and the colloquial.

The notes are adequate, and the synopsis headings are particularly useful for preaching or praying.

Sidney Rushford

BOOK NOTES

An invaluable book for reading and reference is *All Things in Christ*, the selected encyclicals and documents of St. Pius X, edited by Rev. Vincent A. Yzermans (Newman, \$4.00). Those of us who have been benefiting from the decrees of this saintly pontiff—especially those on early and frequent communion—should be eager to read them, and we shall be well rewarded in the reading. And those of us who have been avid readers of biographies of this recently canonized saint should be glad to profit from perusing the documents he issued to the whole Church. They will dispel the too widely held notion that St. Pius X was a good, holy old man but not a pontiff claiming our intellectual respect.

Sheed & Ward are doing a great service by re-issuing Fanfani's memorable work *Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism* (\$3.00), which was first published in 1935. Those who did not have the opportunity* to read it then can read it and find it extremely pertinent today. There is no book like it for giving one an understanding of the basic incompatibility between Catholicism and capitalism.—D.D.

God, a Woman, and the Way, by Rev. M. Raymond, O.C.S.O. (Bruce, \$3.50), uses Mary's seven sorrows and a series of complementary illustrations done by John Andrews as its backdrop. Only a student of theology or one whose day is filled with the things of God could come up with so many views of simple Christian ideas. This fact, plus the strong emotional flavor of the book rather dimmed the beauty for me. I'd love to know if the illustrations—each and every one—could be had for framing purposes. They're arresting meditations.—*Joan G. Franks*

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